

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action mailed November 1, 2007, Applicants amend their application and request reconsideration. No claims are added or cancelled in this amendment so that claims 1-12 remain pending.

Claims 1-12 were rejected as indefinite. In this Amendment appropriate changes are made in the cited language of particular claims to overcome the rejection as to form. Accordingly, further comment on this rejection is not necessary nor provided.

Claims 6 and 8-12 were stated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form and amended to overcome the rejections as to form. Those steps have been taken and claims 6, 8, 10, and 11 are now presented as independent claims. Accordingly, claims 6 and 8-12 should now be allowed.

All claims not indicated as allowable, namely claims 1-5 and 7 were rejected as anticipated by Hess et al. (U.S. Patent 4,620,354, hereinafter Hess. This rejection is respectfully traversed

Hess describes an apparatus and method for applying weather stripping to a vehicle opening. The apparatus includes a feed member 38, an end effector 32, a tactile sensor 48, and a robot 36. This apparatus does not correspond, element-to-element to the apparatus described in claim 1 and therefore cannot anticipate that claim nor claims 2-5 and 7. The latter claims all depend directly or indirectly from claim 1.

The robot 36 in Hess may constitute a programmable articulated mechanical means but that robot is not programmed as in the apparatus of claim 1. The Hess robot 35 is programmed to move the end effector from a vertical home position, place the end effector in a horizontal work position, and move the end effector forward in the door opening at a start position according to the description in Hess at column 2, lines 33-36. According to the continuing description of Hess in column 2, lines 37-68,

the positioning, i.e., in-out and up-down location of the end effector, is achieved through the use of the tactile sensor 48¹ that is mounted on the end effector. Thus, the robot in Hess responds to touch indications, and is not programmed to adapt the trajectory of the feed member to different profiles corresponding to different vehicles as described and claimed in the final paragraph of claim 1. In other words, when different profiles corresponding to different vehicles are employed with the Hess apparatus, the trajectory of the application plate is not changed based upon programming of the robot but based upon a tactile determination made through the tactile sensor 48 and the end effector. Since a proper rejection for anticipation requires that all of the elements of the invention as claimed be described in the prior art, and the feature of the invention just explained is not disclosed by Hess, Hess cannot anticipate any of claims 1-5 and 7. Therefore, upon reconsideration, that rejection should be withdrawn.

Although the foregoing comments with respect to the common rejection of claims 1-5 and 7 are sufficient with respect to overcoming the rejection of dependent claims 2-5 and 7, some further remarks are appropriate with respect to individual dependent claims.

Claim 3 further describes the means for pressing the weather stripping as including an actuator that selectively forces the application plate towards the receiving surface. There appears to be no specific discussing of this claim in the Office Action. There are specific discussions with respect the other dependent claims that were rejected. Thus, Applicants must speculate upon the basis of the rejection.

It would appear that a comparison may have been drawn between the actuator described in claim 3 and, possibly, the roller guide 41 of Hess that is mounted on a pair of guide bars 50 and biased by springs 52 against a stop bar 53. If that proposed comparison between Hess and claim 3 is the intended one, then Applicants specifically traverse the rejection because the springs 52 of Hess constantly apply

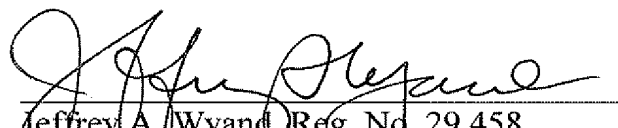
¹ The term tactical sensor in Hess makes no sense and is an obvious misspelling of tactile sensor.

force, unlike the actuator of claim 3. An actuator, as understood in the art and described in the specific embodiment of the patent application, is controllable and can be extended and retracted controllably. Thus, the limitation of claim 3 is clearly not met by Hess and that claim is not anticipated by Hess, independent of the application of Hess to claim 1.

In the apparatus according to claim 4, the application roller rolls on the rolling surface of the thin wing of the weather stripping. This description of claim 4 is not responded to in the comment nominally applying to claim 4 and appearing at paragraph 5 at page 5 of the Office Action.² In fact, this text fails to conform to any limitation of claim 4. The roller guide 41 in Figure 4 of Hess is not arranged to roll on the thin wing of the weather stripping. By contrast, that roller 41 is shown as rolling the hollow longitudinal tube of the weather stripping which adjoins the thin wing. Because of this difference, the rejection of claim 4 as anticipated by Hess should be withdrawn, independent of the action taken with respect to claim 1.

Reconsideration and allowance of all of claims 1-12 are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,


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² It appears that the comment in paragraph 5 at page 5 of the Office Action actually applies to the limitation of claim 5, not to the limitation of claim 4. Thus, the Office Action provides no clear explanation of the rejection of either of claims 3 and 4.